

MXGP MAG

#36_SEPTEMBER 2016

DUNGEY

BARCIA
ANDERSON
OSBORNE
MUSQUIN
WEIMER
SEEWER
JASIKONIS
PATUREL

GAJSER

HERLINGS
FEBVRE
DESALLE
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RACING CATCH UP



RIDER OF THE MONTH

Thomas Covington



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MONSTER GIRLS

MXGP MAG:

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EDITORIAL



Giuseppe Luongo
President of Youthstream Group

The 2016 MXGP season is nearing the end, and here we are on the East Coast of USA in Charlotte, at the cathedral of Motorsport, Charlotte Motor Speedway. At the Charlotte Motor Speedway you breathe motor racing, so for those who love Motorsport, like all of us, it's really a dream, all around the venue there are car shops, motorhome shops, truck shops, bike shops, museums and much more. The Smith family has done an unbelievable job, it's like entering into a wonderland of Motorsport, the venue is massive with many different tracks: NASCAR, road race, dragster and off-road, and for the MXGP of Americas the Charlotte Motorsport Speedway staff together with our staff have built a beautiful Motocross race track.

With two titles to be won and a lot of American stars enter-

ing the game for the last two rounds of the World Championship in USA the finale of the World Championship has never been so brilliant nor so unpredictable. Both MXGP and MX2 World Championships have been long and tough with plenty of surprises along the way and uncertainty right up until the end, Gajser and Herlings looked like they had it pretty easy in the middle of the season, but now they are both obliged to fight hard right up until the end to bring home their much desired victories.

September and October are offering MX fans from all over the world 4 unique events: the Monster Energy MXGP of Americas in Charlotte, the Monster Energy MXGP of USA in Glen Helen, the Monster Energy Motocross of Nations in Maggiora, Italy, and the first ever Monster Energy Supercross on the 8th October in the Veltins-Are-

na in Germany, where all the MXGP, MX2 and the top American Supercross riders will be racing together. The SMX starting grid is getting stronger day by day as each team announces their star line-up; just today Yamaha announced that Barcia will reinforce their team making them a solid contender for the victory. It will be the best line-up of American SX superstars ever to be seen at an event like this in Europe: Dungey, Anderson, Musquin, Osborne, Barcia and Weimer. And together with them the best MXGP/MX2 riders, Gajser, Herlings, Nagl, Febvre, Paulin, Bobryshev, Seewer, ..., will all compete together for their brand to win the first Manufacturers' Cup in the history, and individually to win the Riders' Cup.

Stay tuned on MXGP-TV, or even better, come and follow these 4 exclusive events onsite, and live some historical moments of our sport together.













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SWISS CHEESE

For the first time since 2001 the FIM Motocross World Championship returned to Switzerland and the brand new circuit of Frauenfeld-Gachnang in the north of the country hosted the last round of MXGP before a three week break, and with two home riders for the fans to cheer for the atmosphere was bound to be electric; and it was!

Packed grandstands around the circuit and elevated viewing provided the perfect arena for the fourteenth GP of the season, the MXGP of Switzerland, presented by iXS and do you know what? It did not disappoint.

MX2

Coming into the race, the injured MX2 championship leader Jeffrey Herlings held a slight advantage in the Fox Holeshot competition, topping the standings with 6 first turn victories on his Red Bull KTM with Rockstar Energy Husqvarna's Max Anstie hot on his wheels with 5 in what has now become a two-horse race in this year's contest. With Pauls Jonass M.I.A since his spectacular get-off at Loket and Dylan Ferrandis picking up an arm injury in Timed Practice in Switzerland, all eyes were on Anstie to take the Fox Holeshot

lead in the absence of The Bullet.

But, yo, wait! What was that? Somebody crashed the party? You betcha, and it was in the form of the Italian Stallion Samuele Bernardini; the TM Factory rider romped to his and TM's first Fox Holeshot of the season, which meant that all 7 manufacturers had now scored a holey in 2016. 'Bernie' also led for 2 laps before placing 4th at the flag as Anstie led Jeremy Seewer and Benoit Paturel over the line.

In MX2 Race 2 and no doubt buoyed by his win in Race One, Max Anstie was the quickest to react and crossed the line first to tie Herlings at the top of the Fox Holeshot standings in what turned out to be an epic encounter that saw Seewer lead for 3 laps in the most electrically charged atmosphere of the season. Despite his heroics, Seewer wasn't a match for Anstie in the end but the hometown hero was good enough for 2nd overall in what was a very memorable GP.

After the second mini break of the season, MXGP returned to Assen in The Netherlands for round 14 where Herlings was back on track ready to defend his slender 43

point lead over Jeremy Seewer. You can see the race report elsewhere in these pages, but by far the biggest surprise of the weekend was the 15 year-old Spanish sensation Jorge Prado, drafted in to help bolster the declining numbers at Red Bull KTM with the injury stricken squad missing Pauls Jonass and Davy Pootjes for the rest of the season. And what a great move it turned out to be as the lightening fast starter put his gating technique to perfect use to claim BOTH Fox Holeshots meaning he has a 100% strike rate in this year's competition and his combined results were good enough to net him 3rd overall on his MX2 debut.

Fox Holeshot – MX2 standings after Round 16

Herlings	6
Anstie	6
Jonass	5
Ferrandis	4
Prado	2

MXGP

Back to Switzerland and in the premier class MXGP Antonio Cairoli might have been lagging behind Tim Gajser in the championship standings but when it comes to pulling a 'swifty' from behind the gate TC222 knows

a thing or two about gaining an advantage as his 9 Fox Holeshots to Max Nagl's 7 proves. But when it came down to business in MXGP Race One the KTM and the Husqvarna were outgunned by Team HRC's Gautier Paulin, the Frenchman pulling himself up to 4th in the Fox contest with his 3rd Fox Holey of the season behind Honda Gariboldi's Tim Gajser. In fact, when it came to crossing the iron gates and hitting the stripe, Honda were in fine form with Gajser claiming his 6th of the season to move within one fast getaway of Nagl's Rockstar Energy Husqvarna.

If we were scoring manufacturers holeshots then the 2 starts from GP21 and GT243 meant that Honda had took control of the leader board with 11 to KTM's 9 and that alone shows how close things are between the Japanese and Austrian teams.

The deep artificial sand track of Assen turned out to be a real battle of wills for everybody as overnight rain and a raging storm left the track under water for the first race but despite the soggy conditions it turned out that no one was a match for the Red Bull KTM Jet Ski's of Glenn Coldenhoff and Antonio Cairoli, with the Sicilian claiming an important Fox Holeshot in Race One, his 10th of the season, even if it was short lived; the Flying Scotsman Shaun Simpson was up front by the time he'd left Turn 4 and went on to take his first race win of the year aboard his Wilvo Virus Performance KTM.

With conditions much improved in Race Two after much needed track prep' between moto's Cairoli's teammate was in no mood for splitting knobbles as he did first time out, and The Hoff made sure it was him who felt a little bit

of Black Plate love to record his first Fox Holeshot of the season. With KTM bagging both holeshots in Assen they are tied with Honda with 11 apiece but it is Cairoli who heads to America on top of the Fox Holeshot standings with 10 and now that he is armed and dangerous after switching back the SX450F he will be looking for at least one more in either of the US rounds in Charlotte or Glen Helen to secure the 10,000 first prize. Nagl and Gajser are the only other contenders for the crown with 2 rounds to go.

Fox Holeshot – MXGP standings after Round 16

Cairoli 10
Nagl 7
Gajser 6



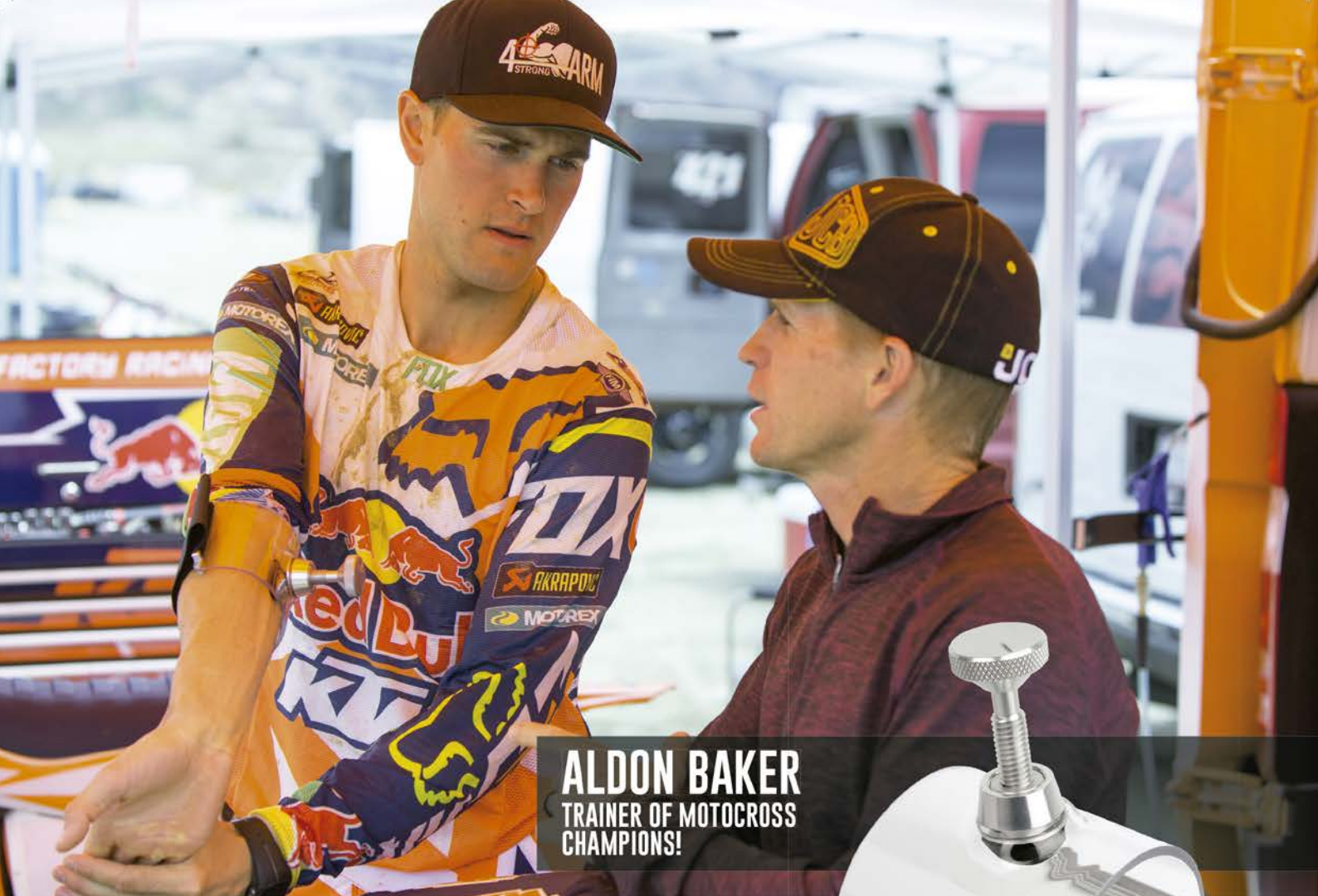
FOX HOLESHOT AWARD



MXGP
MOTO 1
ANTONIO CAIROLI
MOTO 2
GLENN COLDENHOFF

MXGP OF THE NETHERLANDS 28/08/16





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REVOLUTION AND REVELATION

Are you a glass half-full or glass half empty type of person? There seems to be two types of motocross fans in the world. There are those that cringe every time a new venue pops up, while the other is more open minded and is excited to see a new crowd, and more importantly, a new track that no rider holds an advantage at.





If we look back at the last two rounds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the MXGP rounds of Switzerland and The Netherlands, we've quickly learned that these man-made tracks are providing epic racing that is completely unpredictable.

Take the MXGP of Switzerland presented by iXS for example. We arrived in Frauenfeld-Gachnang, Switzerland, to find a track that was built in a flat field. We know, for the old-school motocross fan, that statement alone sounds like finger nails down a blackboard, but give it half a chance because it actually turned out to be a testament to the quote 'don't judge a book by its cover.'

Open your eyes, Frauenfeld-Gachnang was actually grassroots motocross, just

without any hills. Most riders will have raced a similar type of flat-field track at least once in their life times, and for many, it's the type of track that got them hooked on racing to begin with. Take elevation and high-speed sections out of the equation, and all of a sudden pure horsepower won't be the difference in whether a race is won or lost. Take massive jumps out of the equation, as well, and it won't be the ballsiest rider that wins either. What does that leave you with? A race that took the cream of motocross back to basics with plenty of turns, ruts and fun jumps.

As for the surface, it wasn't clay and it wasn't sand, it was just plain ol' soil that had an insane amount of grip. It also got incredibly rutty; in fact, it had

some of the deepest ruts of the season, ask Monster Energy Yamaha Factory Racing's Romain Febvre, he had a pretty unorthodox crash after he got snagged while in full rip'n'rail mode.

From the 450cc to the 350cc, and then back to the 450cc for the Swiss GP, you had to wonder if Red Bull KTM Factory Racing's Antonio Cairoli was at a loss when it comes to beating Honda Gariboldi's Tim Gajser, hence the indecisiveness. Cairoli didn't waste a lot of time in quashing that assumption with his run-away win in the opening race which was made easier by Gajser who had a vicious high-side on the opening lap, and Febvre, who got punished by a deep rut.

Race two sang to a different tune as the young guns came to grips



with the abstruse circuit and started a brawl with the old dog, which resulted in Cairoli accepting the fact he's not that crazy any more and the risk outweighs the reward. He did try to keep up with the sub-twenty-four year olds though, but ran out of juice in the final stages of the race and even got passed on the last lap after tipping over in a slow turn. Gajser ended up crushing everyone once again, although it was Cairoli who wound up as the grand prix winner ahead of Gajser and Febvre in that order.

The MX2 grand prix was on 'roids in Switzerland mostly because the kid that is running second in the FIM MX2 World Championship, Jeremy Seewer, is Swiss, and with the usual suspect Jeffrey Herlings still out-of-order due to his slow healing collar-bone, Seewer had a genuine shot at topping the box for the first time in

his career. The Swiss fans have patiently waited fifteen years for the motocross grand prix to return, with the last Swiss GP being back in 2001, so when it did, they all rocked out ripe and ready to show their appreciation.

Suzuki World MX2's Jeremy Seewer was dumbfounded, "I didn't expect the Swiss public to be so great! So many people, flags...it was amazing." He said, "I didn't win, if I did it would have been a small present to them, and myself, but I am happy to have three second place finishes in a row." Even the spoiler, Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Factory Racing's Max Anstie, was impressed, "I think all of Switzerland was here today cheering for Jeremy Seewer," he said in the post race interview after he had caused an upset with his second double moto victory of the season.

What's not to love about a track surrounded by grand stands? It intensifies the atmosphere and offers exceptional views of the track, which allows the fans to enjoy the racing more. The MXGP of Switzerland presented by iXS was an example of this, and so too was the MXGP of The Netherlands which took place at one of the most famous MotoGP venues in the world, the Dutch TT Circuit, Assen.

Assen. Assen. Assen.

Assen was easily the most dramatic, eventful and emotionally charged grand prix of the season. After making its MXGP debut last year, where we finally made a breakthrough with the fans that were initially against the idea of a man-made circuit inside the confines of a permanent motorsport facility, Assen was bound to be bigger and better this year. And it was.





Pandemonium is probably the best word to describe the grand prix that weekend, from the weather, to the fans, to Jeffrey Herlings' return, to Tim Gajser's DNF, to Jorge Prado podiuming on his MX2 debut, and even that Desalle beat some of the highest acclaimed sand riders in the world for his first grand prix victory since 2014.

Starting with the weather. If you thought glorious weather, like the weather that kicked off the MXGP of The Netherlands on Saturday, in a non-exotic location such as Holland sounds too good to be true, you'd be right. After a mega day of Qualifying, clear blue skies, warm and sunny, Mother Nature threw her toys out of the cot on Sunday with the fiercest thunderstorm you could ever imagine.

The track was always difficult, even when it was dry, but after it had been slayed by that psychot-

ic schizophrenic we call Mother Nature, it turned into a cruel beast and was easily the most demanding track of the season. The riders struggled, which in a weird and twisted way made great racing for the fans who loved the action it provided.

Hands up who thought Jeffrey Herlings would get beaten in the sand at his home grand prix? Right, look around; everyone with his or her hand up is a liar! No one, I repeat, no one saw it coming, but it did, thanks to Rockstar Energy Husqvarna's Thomas Covington's mysterious ability to ride mud. In case you forgot, the American, T-Cov won the MX2 Grand Prix of Mexico in the mud last year, so for a kid that comes from a country that has much better weather than Europe, it's a little mind boggling.

With Herlings going up to the premier class next year (settle-down,

we are excited, too), it doesn't look like KTM will have a void after all with Jorge Prado looking like he could fill those boots. At the tender age of fifteen years old, Prado was able to go to the line first on race day after winning the MX2 Qualifying Race the day before. "I am not strong enough yet to ride full gas for thirty minutes when the track is really heavy," the Spanish phenomenon said regarding the first race where he faded back to twelfth, but that was soon forgotten when he nailed the holeshot in the second race and made Herlings work harder than ever. The Bullet finally got the job done for the win and his sixtieth grand prix victory, while Prado held on for second, which landed him on the box. "I was only wanting a top ten this weekend," Prado said, "it's better than I expected to be on the podium, it's a dream come true."

It was also a good day for

HSF Logistics Motorsports Brian Bogers, who was the fastest rider out on track in the first race, even though he cartwheeled at turn-one. The Dutchman stood proudly next to Herlings on the box. It was his second podium appearance of the year.

In MXGP, Honda Gariboldi's Tim Gajser could have wrapped up the title. All he had to do was beat Red Bull KTM Factory Racing's Antonio Cairoli by a single point, and that would have been it for the year, but instead he crumbled and looked out of sorts all weekend. He only finished eighteenth overall after DNF'ing the final race because he destroyed his throttle housing in a crash. It was a little bit disappointing for the Slovenian, but he seemed to be relatively relaxed and said, "These things

can happen in motorsport, I will try and learn as much as I can from it."

The weekend went a lot better for the likes of Wilvo Virus Performance KTM's Shaun Simpson who exhibited flawless composure in the brutal conditions for his first race win of the season, but missed out on his slice of podium pie when he collided with Team HRC's Gautier Paulin at the first turn and had to stop in pit-lane for running repairs. Monster Energy Kawasaki's Clement Desalle, as in the real Clement Desalle, made his first appearance of the season. Okay, it wasn't really his first appearance, but Desalle is the kind of guy who you just expect to be on or around the podium, even though he hadn't won a grand prix since June 2014. 'You're only as good as your

last race' is how the saying goes, which is a fantastic quote for Desalle at the moment. Cairoli also looked pretty comfortable for second place while his teammate Glenn Coldenhoff put in his best ride of the season for third overall.

It was a bizarre day at the MXGP of The Netherlands, mostly due to the weather changing everything, but we can just thank our lucky stars we were at a permanent facility, with the best amenities. If that amount of rain had come down anywhere else, the paddock and parking would have been a muddy pigsty. Anyway, we can't live by 'if's' and looking forward, we're off to America for the final two rounds of the FIM Motocross World Championship where our champions will be crowned.





FIM Motocross World Championship

Standings

MXGP CHAMP. STANDINGS

1. T. Gajser (SLO, **HON**), 653 points
2. A. Cairoli (ITA, **KTM**), 588 p.
3. M. Nagl (GER, **HUS**), 542 p.
4. R. Febvre (FRA **YAM**), 522 p
5. E. Bobryshev (RUS, **HON**), 494 p.
6. J. VanHorebeek (BEL, **YAM**) 477p.
7. G. Coldenhoff (NED, **KTM**), 347 p.
8. C. Desalle (BEL, **KAW**), 342 p.
9. V. Guillard (FRA, **YAM**), 326 p.
10. S. Simpson (GBR, **KTM**), 307 p.



MX2 CHAMP. STANDINGS

1. J. Herlings (NED, **KTM**), 644 points
2. J. Seewer (SUI, **SUZ**), 568 p.
3. B. Paturel (FRA, **YAM**), 460 p.
4. M. Anstie (GBR, **HUS**), 447 p.
5. P. Jonass (LAT, **KTM**), 403 p.
6. D. Ferrandis (FRA, **KAW**), 378 p.
7. P. Petrov (BUL, **KAW**), 351 p.
8. B. Bogers (NED, **KTM**), 349 p.
9. S. Bernardini (ITA, **TM**), 341 p.
10. A. Tonkov (RUS, **HUS**), 320 p.

MXGP MANUFACTURERS

1. Honda **689** points
2. Yamaha **628** points
3. KTM **617** points
4. Husqvarna **557** points
5. Kawasaki **453** points
6. Suzuki **337** points

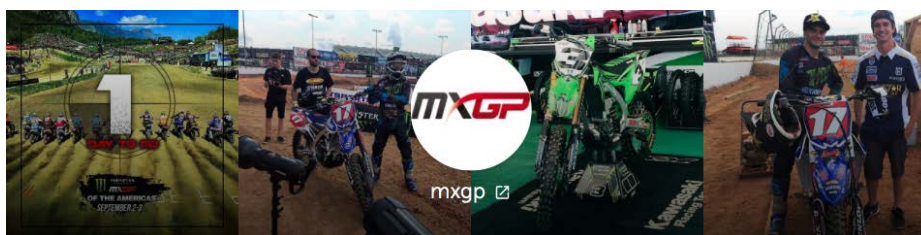
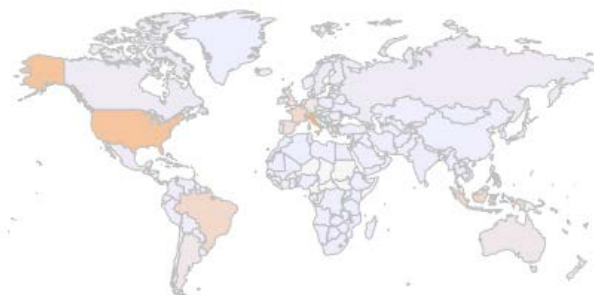


MX2 MANUFACTURERS

1. KTM **740** points
2. Suzuki **579** points
3. Kawasaki **569** points
4. Yamaha **552** points
5. Husqvarna **549** points
6. TM **341** points
7. Honda **293** points

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@mxgp it's going to be awesome

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Gavin will be taking this Friday off to go watch @mxgp from @CLTMotorSpdwy!

@aliKbriggs

@CRTwotwo @mxgp awesome! This will my 1st race to watch in person! Can't wait to root you on!!

@kake_p_7

What a race that was mx2 race one in the Netherlands..... @mxgp @MotorsTV@JHerlings84 @

@poeliebombarda

Awesome battle @ttcircuitassen between @JHerlings84 and @jorgeprado61 !!! @mxgp

@cllrachelreid

Great fun @mxgp in Lommel today. Brilliant win for @MaxAnstie too

@ukdhracer

@mxgp wow what a race at assen All classes , all Motos, wow! #DutchGP

@kurtbrain

Well race day @mxgp was amazing, should have been 1 1 for @shaunsimpson24 but atmosphere was unforgettable

@Doratheeblauw

Cool to work for the @mxgp on @ttcircuitassen. Sand, mud and speed! And to see our dutchies @JHerlings84 and @glenncoldenhoff do so great!

STUDIO SHOW LIVE ON FACEBOOK

Check out the studio show LIVE on Facebook every race weekend.



Herlings vs Prado MXGP of The Netherlands 2016



Gajser, Cairoli & Febvre battle MXGP of Switzerland presented by iXS



BOOK, INSTAGRAM, YOUTUBE



@blake_whartonAmerican
@thomasc64 having some fun in the mud at the TT of Assen
#mxgp #huskvarna #ktm



@hilkens87
Together with kiara fontanesi@mxgp Assen
#mx #mxgp #wmx #8#kiarafontanesi thnx for the cap.#mxgpbelgium #kev-instrijbos



@dougwilson94
#motomonday 4 days and counting until the #MXGP at Charlotte Motor Speedway NC. Can't wait #UFO

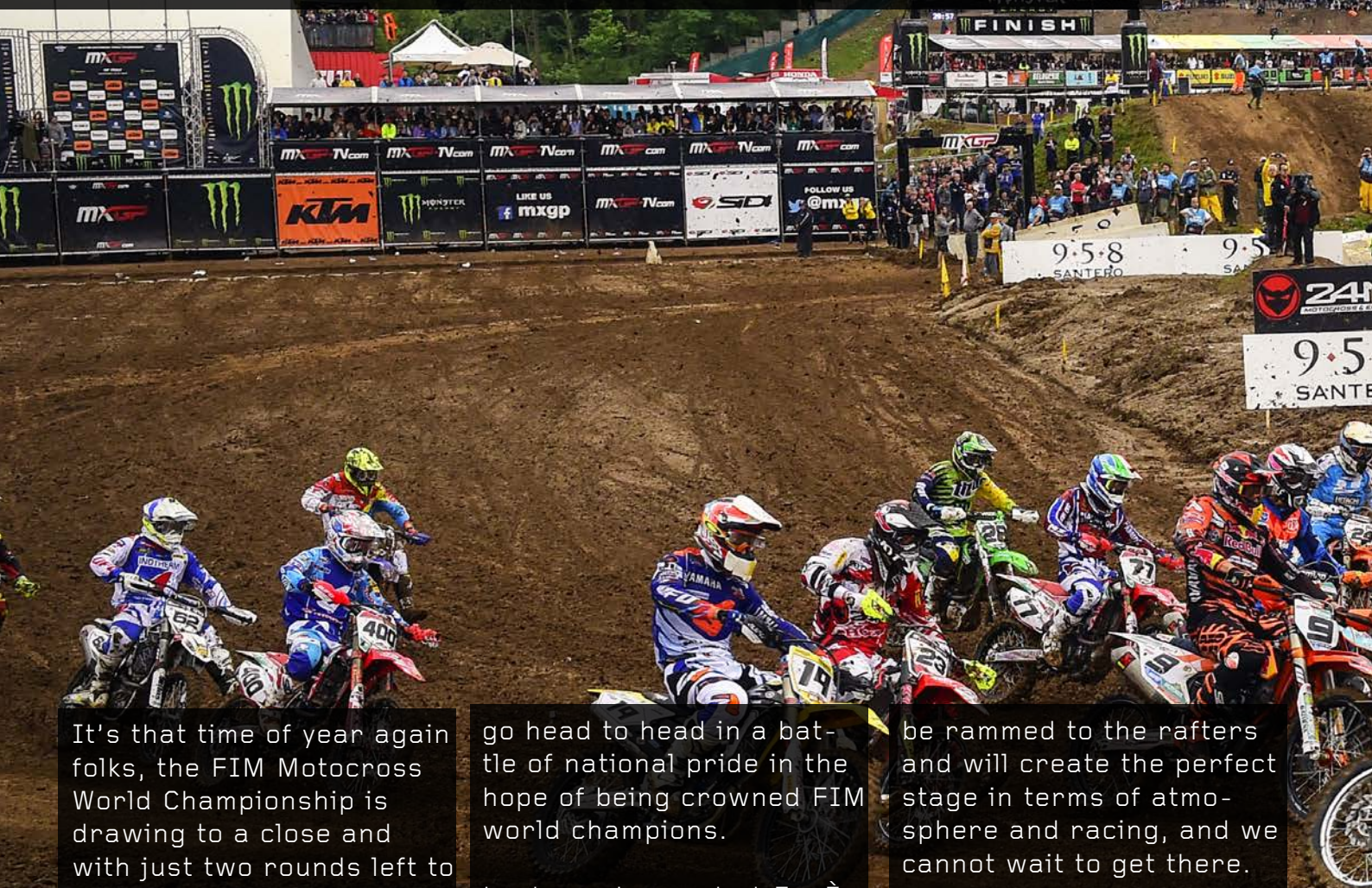


@jacmalins
@jacmalins Sunset over the campsite at Assen!!
#mxgp #assen #mx #motocross#campsite



@mitiyu
TheHoleshotMaster
Couldn't be more happy about this kid and his family. Feel lucky to be there every time you are making history. Thanks @redbullesp for made it possible.

FOR PRIDE AND GLORY



It's that time of year again folks, the FIM Motocross World Championship is drawing to a close and with just two rounds left to run in The USA our attentions will quickly switch to the biggest race in the world, the 70th edition of the FIM Monster Energy Motocross of Nations and 30 years after it was last held there, Maggiora Park will play host once again as the worlds best riders

go head to head in a battle of national pride in the hope of being crowned FIM world champions.

Last year's event at ErnÈe in France was just epic in every sense of the word and it would be hard to top that, but somehow you feel that the organisers behind this years race might go even bigger. One thing we are sure of though is that the hills of Maggiora will

be rammed to the rafters and will create the perfect stage in terms of atmosphere and racing, and we cannot wait to get there.

So much has been said and written over the past 30 years about the 1986 MXoN where Team USA raced to their 6th consecutive victory with the team now known as 'The Dream Team' made up of all American Honda riders,





David Bailey, Rick Johnson and Johnny O'Mara, but this year, three decades on, fans from all over the world will be hoping for a little bit more of that Maggiora Magic that captured the imagination like no other event before. Some fans may have witnessed the event first hand and many more would have witnessed it on VHS. However, the tens of thousands of fans that were not there but wished they had been will have heard story upon story about that historic event and will be making it their MECCA at the end of September.

But that was then, this is

now. Of course it's nice to reminisce about the past but time moves on and there will be a new generation of riders ready to make their own piece of history, so let's take a look at some of the favourites ahead of the main event itself, starting with the defending champions Team France.

TEAM FRANCE – 2015

Ranking: 1st

He may not have had the most spectacular of seasons in MXGP but Gautier Paulin will be looking forward to racing on the biggest stage of all as Team Captain. This year the two-time MXoN win-

ner will race in the Open Class while former MXGP world champion Romain Febvre will switch from the Open Class to the MXGP Class. Nothing much in that you might think, but after winning the MXGP world championship last year Febvre said he would not race with the 'number one' plate as he didn't like it, but in Maggiora he will have no choice, so it just remains to be seen whether there might be a little extra pressure attached to that primary digit on the front of his Yamaha. Both Paulin and Febvre go to Italy as defending champions having made up two thirds of last years victo-

rious team, and it would have been three winning riders had Dylan Ferrandis not broken his arm in Switzerland. With Benoit Paturel as the replacement rider in MX2 will he be the weak link or the dark horse of the team? His three podiums this year would suggest that he won't be fazed by the occasion and who knows, he might just add another dimension to the team.

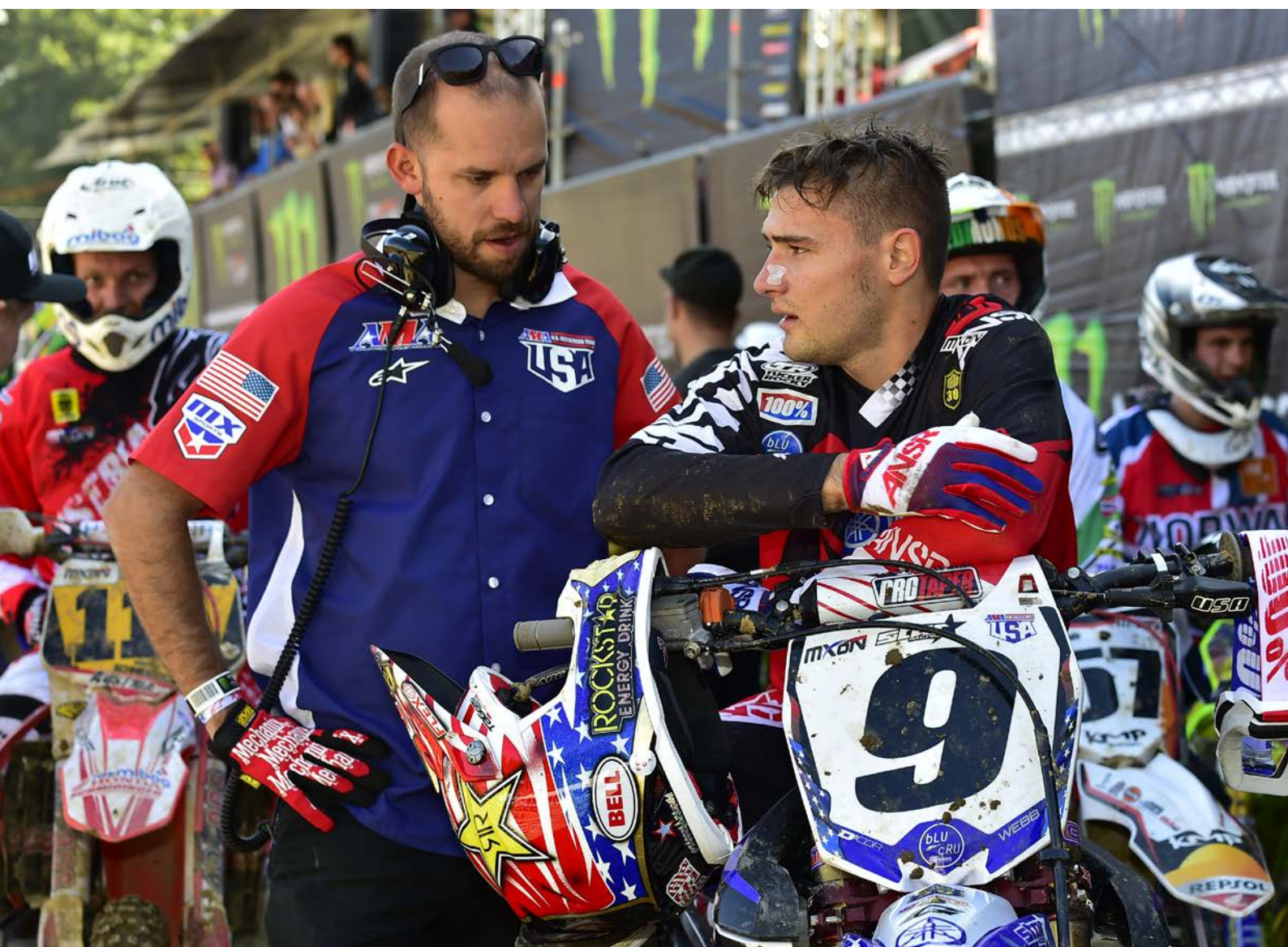
TEAM USA – 2015 Ranking: 2nd

From 1981 – 1993 Team USA were unstoppable in the Motocross of Nations taking an unrivalled thirteen consecutive victories before suffering

their first defeat at the hands of Team Great Britain in 1994. Since then, the longest that Team USA have gone without a win has been 4 years, from 2001-2004 before reclaiming The Chamberlain Trophy in 2005 which sent them on another win streak of seven-in-a-row. That run came to an end in 2012 in Belgium and while the Americans are getting closer to the stop step – last year they lost to France by 2 points – it's hard to believe that as well as no team wins there had been no race wins since Ryan Villopoto's victory in Race Three at Saint Jean d'Angély until Justin Barcia's Race One victory at

Ernee last year.

Recently crowned AMA 250 Motocross Champion and 2-time AMA Supercross 250cc champion Cooper Webb will make his second MXoN appearance and will switch from the Open Class to the MXGP Class whilst Alex Martin, runner up in this years AMA 250 Motocross Championship will represent Team USA for the first time in MX2. Maggiora will be the Yamaha riders' third appearance having raced for Team Puerto Rico in 2013 and 2014. The third rider on the team will be Husqvarna's Jason Anderson and the MXoN rookie will need to bring his A-Game





with him, especially after taking the summer off due to injury. There will be people out there who will say this is an American 'B' Team but the last time 'they' said that was in 2009 when Ryan Dungey arrived as a 450 rider as opposed to his usual 250 mount, with Jake Weimer and Ivan Tedesco in tow. Team USA won! You have been warned.

TEAM BELGIUM – 2015 **Ranking: 3rd**

One of the most successful Nations in the history of the event, and apart from the 15 victories that ranks them 3rd in the all-

time win list Belgium has an incredible podium record that saw 16 consecutive visits to the box from 1995-2010. Even more impressive is that from 1990-2015 Belgium has missed the podium on just TWO occasions, 1994 and 2011, which means you can never write this team off. Team Manager Joel Smets has opted for experience over youth and all three of his riders have won this event in the past. Clement Desalle was on the team in 2013 that was victorious in Germany, but was in no mood for celebrating after picking up a dislocated shoulder in the final race,

and after a season hampered by injury in 2016 he is coming into form at the right time, evident by his recent Assen GP win. Desalle will race MXGP while Jeremy van Horebeek will once again race MX2 on a specially prepped YZ250F and will be hoping to add a second Nations victory to his name after the one he collected alongside Desalle in 2013. Kevin Strijbos last tasted MXoN success back in 2004 twelve years ago and he has shown that anything is possible after collecting his first MXGP win in NINE years earlier this year. Is there another special day in store for the

31-year-old Belgian?

Podium Contenders

We only need to look at the results from 2015 to see what kind of craziness this event can throw up, and after finishing 4th last year Estonia were the best of the rest. It's unlikely that they will get so close the podium at Maggiora but with Tanel Leok competing in his sixteenth consecutive MXoN you can bet he will be doing all he can to make it happen.

Since Team Great Britain's last victory in 1994 the second most successful nation has mustered up just one podium since then, at Nismes, Belgium in 1997. Last year a podium possibility ended before

Saturday was even over and with Tommy Searle, Max Anstie and Shaun Simpson lining up in Maggiora the British fans will no doubt be in full force to get them on the box at the very least.

Team Switzerland has gradually been building up their resources and many believe that this year could be a break-out year for Valentin Guillod, Jeremy Seewer and Arnaud Tonus to get Switzerland on to the MXoN podium for the first time. The trio last represented their country together in Latvia 2014 and they should work well together to achieve that elusive goal.

The Netherlands will be

a forced to be reckoned with and will arrive with a strong team, possibly the strongest in a number of years. Glenn Coldenhoff has tasted MXGP podium fizz already this year and will line up in the MXGP Class while his MX2 teammate will be Brian Bogers who at the time of writing has enjoyed two visits to the MX2 podium in Italy and at home in The Netherlands. The big news is that Jeffrey Herlings will line up at the biggest race of the year in the Open Class for the first time since he last appeared for Team NL in 2012. Jeff doesn't do things by half and nothing less than a podium will do for The Bullet.

Team Australia first took





to the MXoN podium back in 2011, it was also their last visit, but 4th in 2013 and 7th last year after a last minute rider replacement have been notable performances since. Recently crowned MX1 national champion Dean Ferris will return to Italy in what will be his 3rd appearance for his country and joining him will be Australia's MX2 champion Jed Beaton who came to Europe earlier this year to race the EMX250 round at Switzerland where he took home an 11th place in Race 1. Kirk Gibbs, the 2015 Australian MX1 champion and this year's runner up to Ferris will also head

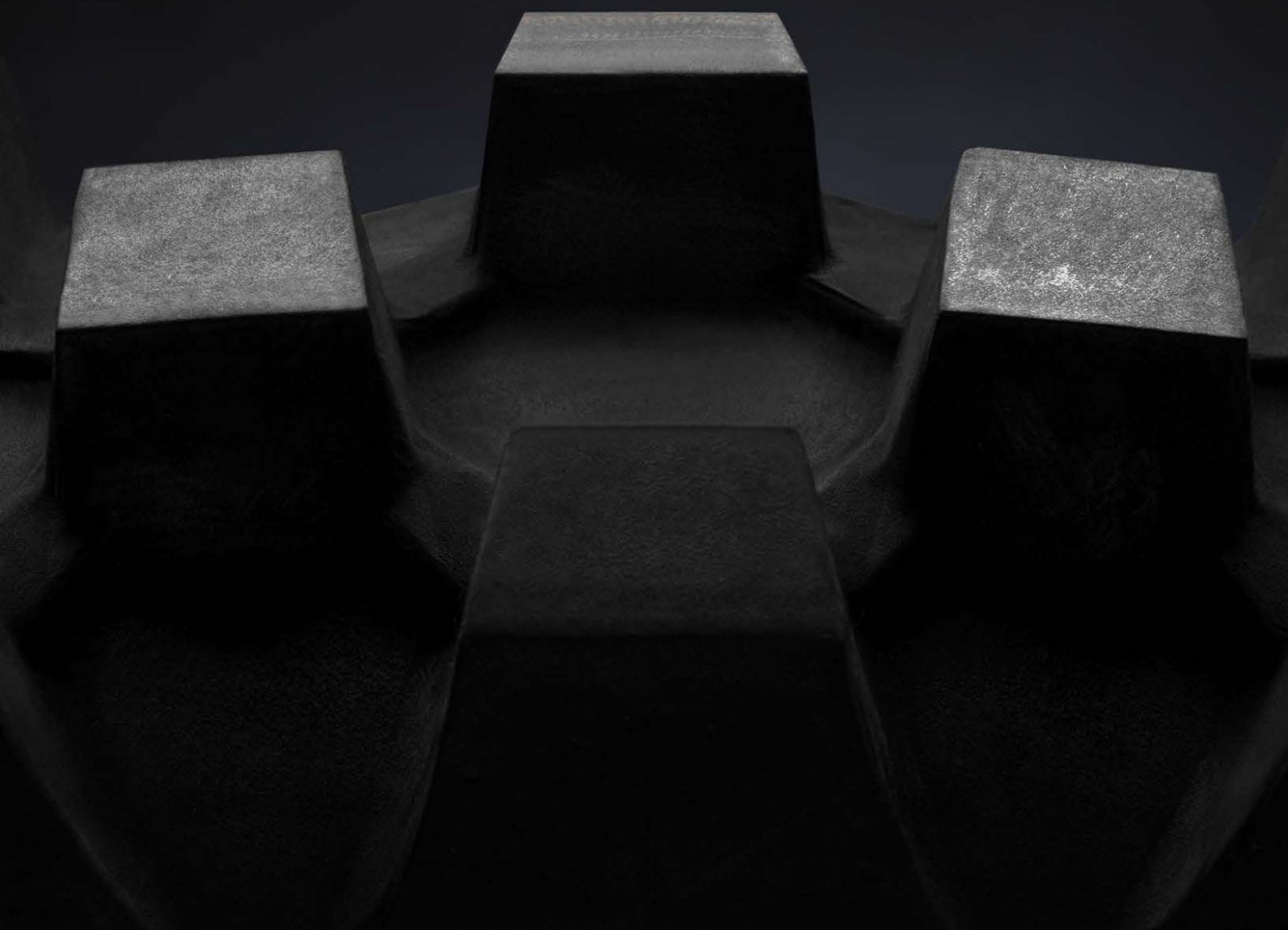
to Italy as a first-timer and they will be looking for a top five at least but knowing that a second podium will not be out of reach.

Finally, we can't do this thing without giving a mention to the host nation Team Italy, who last made the podium in 2013. Last year Team Manager Thomas Traversini gave the younger generation the opportunity to race in France knowing that he couldn't rely on Cairoli, Philippaerts, Guarneri and Lupino forever and two of them return to compete in what will no doubt be the biggest race of their careers. Samuele Bernardini will race for Team Italy on

the Italian-built TM Factory machine in MX2 with Michele Cervellin lining up in the Open Class. As for Italy's MXGP rider well, that responsibility falls to Antonio Cairoli who last rode an event of this magnitude at Franciacorta in 2009. That day the Sicilian won a titanic battle over Chad Reed in Race One before he was sent cartwheeling into turn two in the second race, an incident that wrecked his Yamaha and left Italy off of the podium. You may have noticed that he is starting to get back to peak form and if can arrive at Maggiora feeling 100% then he might just single-handedly bring the house down.



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TC64 - The Tango Man

After almost three years racing the MXGP circuit in MX2 the American Thomas Covington has, during his time in Europe, put in his fair share of notable performances with two of them in particular carrying a huge amount of gravitas; his race and GP victory in Leon, Mexico, in 2015 and most recently his race win at Assen where he became the first rider to defeat Jeffrey Herlings at home in the sand in six years. But who is he and what has his journey been like up to this point?





Before we go anywhere though, how about that first moto victory at Assen which saw The Bullet, The Sandman, the fastest sand rider in the world suffer a first ever defeat on home soil? It must have felt pretty good, right?

'Yeah, that's unbelievable. I have a lot of respect for Jeffrey but it feels good to get a win over him before he goes up to the 450 class (laughs).'

'I got off to a good start behind Prado in 2nd and Paturel and Sterry both came by me and they were going for it, but the track was so gnarly. But I knew I could keep the speed that I was going without crashing. I managed to get around Prado and Paturel, and Sterry ended up going down so that gave me the lead and after that I tried to

stay smooth and find some good lines out there, but the track was ridiculously rough, the lines were so deep; it was brutal for sure! The main thing was just trying to stay up and keep it going forward,' this is how Covington recollected his infamous victory at Round 16. But there was a time when victory at any level seemed a million miles away.

Starting out

Thomas Covington started riding a motorcycle around a field at 4 years old and after a few months was entered into his first ever race. However, the confines of an arenacross stadium were more restrictive than the openness of the great outdoors, as he would swiftly find out.

'I ran into the wall going into the stadium and then

on the first lap I crashed in the whoops and my mom ran down on to the track and brought me back up to the stands and told me I wasn't allowed to race anymore and so after that I didn't ride a bike for about a year.'

But things eventually calmed down and after swapping his KTM 50cc auto for a Yamaha PW50, the life of Thomas Covington the motocross racer entered its second chapter.

'The PW50 suited me a little bit better. I went to Loretta Lynn's when I was 5 and got 4th and then went back the next year when I was 6 and won the championship in the PW50 class and that's sort of where it all started off for me in 2003.'

From that moment Covington

knew that racing dirt bikes was something he wanted to be a part of and pretty soon the Vernon, Alabama, native was making a name for himself in the amateur ranks, winning his last Loretta's title in 2012 as a 250 'B' Class rider.

So how did he end up in Europe?

'Actually, I had met Harry Nolte who was Team Manager at CLS at the time; I'd met him at the Anaheim Supercross earlier that year, and he and Mitch Payton were close at that time. I talked to him a little bit and joked that 'I'm gonna come and ride for you one day' but without really thinking about it, and then later (that year) he asked if I wanted to come and do the EMX250 round at Matterley Basin in England which I thought

would be a cool idea. As amateurs in the US we only have 7 major amateur races a year, or we did back then, and after Loretta's we don't have a race for a long time, so I figured why not? I'd never been out of the US and obviously I thought it would be cool to go.'

As it turned out, his brief encounter as a European tourist raised a few eyebrows and put him in the metaphorical shop window. That season, the EMX250 class raced just one main event at each round, the riders qualifying via a semi-final. Valentin Guillod won Semi-Final 'A' from Benoit Paturel, Steven Clarke and Thomas Kjer Olsen. Covington, on his first visit to 'The Basin' won Semi-Final B by just over one second from Jeremy

Seewer, Damon Graulus and Brian Bogers. Today, all of those riders are gracing podiums in MX2 or have had successful EMX careers. In the Main Event Covington placed fourth, but not before he'd put in a stint challenging Seewer for the lead. But, the result was secondary to everything else that the young American took from that race.

'Before I came over for Matterley I didn't know a thing about GP's; I knew the name Cairoli but that's about it, but other than that I didn't know anything and it really opened my eyes when I came over and I was like 'wow this is awesome.' I liked the atmosphere and everything.'

From there you could say there was no turning back





and that this is where he wanted to be, but actually the reality was quite different. After Matterley he jumped on a plane and headed back home to the US having enjoyed his brief encounter with the British countryside and looked set to become one of Mitch Payton's young protégés at Pro Circuit Kawasaki; the stadia and the American outdoors were just around the corner, that was until someone decided to re-write the script.

'I'd signed my contract with Kawasaki and Pro Circuit in the US and I was completely committed to doing the outdoors and supercross, and then I got the opportunity to do the first three GP's

in 2014 but only as a sort of warm up for the outdoor series as that year I wasn't doing supercross. In Qatar I DNF'd the first race and got 3rd in the second moto and had a couple more good rides in Thailand and Brazil and then I was asked if I wanted to stay, and that was the first time I'd really thought seriously about staying in GP's.'

Now most sane American's would have stuck to the plan and ran with the contract that was on the table but before the ink had even dried and with the offer of a lifetime now being dangled before his very eyes Tom, aged just 18, had a major decision to make, one that would impact his racing ca-

reer one way or another.

'After those first three GP's I don't know, it got me addicted to I don't know, maybe the riding style or just the atmosphere of the GP's; there was just something about it I really loved and I felt good with the team after only just a few weeks. I mean, riding for Pro Circuit is probably the dream ride for any kid growing up in the US but I thought that coming to Europe would be such a good experience and something that I couldn't pass up, not only with racing but also just life in general; to experience living in Europe and travelling all over the world' and just like that, the young Thomas Covington had just been se-

duced by MXGP and the FIM Motocross World Championship.

No such thing as the ideal world

First impressions are meant to last and in Tom's case they lasted about three rounds of MX2. When the series returned to start the European leg of MXGP at Arco di Trento the reality suddenly started to kick in; the dizzying heights of that 3rd place finish in Race Two at Qatar was a distant memory and the season ended with him in a lowly 17th place in the final standings. Most riders would have been happy with that as a first attempt but not Tom; he was used to being up front, and here in

Europe he wasn't.

'That first season in MX2 when the series came back to the European rounds were some of the toughest times of my life because I'd been used to being running up front as an amateur in the US, my speed was always there but then to come to Arco and not even be inside the top ten maybe even top fifteen was crazy, and it wasn't just one bad weekend it was one bad weekend after the next and towards the end of that season I was doubting what I was doing, thinking 'what am I doing? I wanna go home, I wanna quit, whatever' but my dad was probably the one guy that really motivated me to keep going no matter how

bad it got, just to keep going to get better. So that was a tough time but it brought me to where I am now. I think I needed to go through that.'

In 2015 Covington placed 12th overall, recording two 4th place finishes early on in the season before taking a historic race and GP victory at Leon in Mexico at the penultimate round, surprising everybody who witnessed the occasion, and stood alongside him on the podium was his father Mitch who beamed with absolute pride at his son's achievement. From thinking about quitting the sport twelve months earlier to standing on the top step of an MX2 podium in Mexico, and then with the encouragement





from his dad, standing up there for the whole world to see encapsulated everything that Thomas had been through.

'That was one of the most special moments of my life. I've got this little card sitting in my room now that my dad sent me that first year and it contains a Winston Churchill quote. On the front it says 'when you're going through hell ...' then you open it up and it says, '... keep on going'. I wish I could have won my home GP the next weekend at Glen Helen, but Mexico was cool, too, and I'm glad my mom and my dad were there to see it, too.'

At the end of the '15 season TC64 the son of Monster En-

ergy had been drafted in to the Rockstar Energy Husqvarna squad of Jacky Martens in what was a surprise move within the motocross paddock, but one that Covington sees has been for the better. At 20 he is gaining an understanding about what is needed to make it to the top, and it's his new boss Jacky, a former 500cc world champion, that has helped him to see what he's been missing.

'My first two years with Kawasaki I had a lot of freedom from my side to come and go as I pleased during the winter time; go home whenever and stay as long as I wanted to, and they let me do what I thought I needed which was cool; but maybe that's what I need-

ed at the time, I was only 17 when I first came over and it's not easy to move to Europe when they don't speak your language, so I ended up spending more time at home the first couple years. But this year with Jacky they've given me so much support and that's something that I wasn't really used to, every aspect of my programme they took control of; they hooked me up with Joel Roelants as my trainer, they told me to go to Sardinia to train in January when all the tracks around Belgium are terrible and all the tracks are pretty much underwater. They told me what I needed to do and I had a lot of faith in Jacky because a lot of great riders have come through his team. Whatever he says his opinion

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is, I don't take it for granted; I appreciate it.'

After three years Tom has realised that if he is to do well here in Europe he has to be fully committed to the cause; there's no point in pussy-footing around thinking he maybe wants to be here and do this but more like he has to be here to do this. To be successful he, like anybody else needs to embrace everything about it; the teams, the weather, the tracks, the culture, everything! If nothing else, Jacky Martens has at least taught him that.

As he boarded the 'plane out of Europe for America, how much was he looking forward to the last two GP's of the season?

'I have nearly three seasons under my belt now and go-

ing into Charlotte I am really excited for it; for sure I think there's gonna be a lot of pressure just because a lot of the American riders will be there, kids I grew up racing against. It will be cool to see how it all turns out because with Charlotte being a brand new track it will be more of like a level playing field for everyone.'

'I'm also looking forward to the fact I will have some time at home and I will stay out there after Glen Helen as well, I will be there for about a month. But I just can't wait to touch down in Charlotte and walk on home soil and see my family. My parents are coming to pick me up so that's what I'm looking forward to right now, then I'll just focus on the race when I get there.'

In Europe there used to be

a soda drink served in a can called 'Tango' and the commercial that ran on TV to promote it involved a 'Candid Camera' secretly filmed video where some character would run up behind unsuspecting passers-by and from out of nowhere would slap their face with both hands or maybe even shout some random nonsense down their ears with a megaphone making good use of the element of surprise. At Assen, Thomas Covington surprised everybody once again just as he did in Mexico in 2015 with his Race One win, but he also showed us how he has matured as a racer, and while everyone else crashed out around him, TC64 maintained his composure to take the 'W' only this time though he will be looking to do it again in front of his home fans in Charlotte and/or Glen Helen.



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The “Magic” three

O’Mara, Bailey, Johnson

Thirty years ago American’s Johnny O’Mara, David Bailey and Ricky Johnson dominated the Motocross of Nations to take home the Chamberlain Trophy for the sixth time in succession. It was a dream team built by manager Roger De Coster where all three riders will be forever remembered for their incredible performances that day.

As the oldest motocross race sanctioned by the FIM, the prestigious Motocross of Nations has a rich history filled with many great moments. What happened at Maggiora back in 1986 when Team USA’s Dream Team did the unthinkable was easily one of the greatest. The Motocross of Nations will celebrate 70 years this year on September 24th and 25th at the exact same venue, Maggiora, Italy.

Team USA officially entered this event with all the ingredients to win in 1981, after a couple of attempts prior not amounting to much. But when Roger De Coster, a long time winner and supporter of this race, decided to plan a project as manager of team American Honda, things changed and Team USA became the team to beat at the MXoN, as well as in the US Championships. Johnny ‘O Show’ O’Mara was already a member of the winning team in 1981, joined one year later by David ‘Professor’ Bailey who became one of the main members of the team; winner in 1982, 1983, 1984 and 1985, David was of course a member of the 86 squad alongside Johnny (winner in 1981, 1982 and 1984) and Ricky ‘Bad Boy’ Johnson, the newcomer in the Honda Team.

The 1986 season was pretty incredible for this young talent (already a winner of the MXoN in 1984) who proved during the previous seasons his potential but really exploded in 1986. Dominating the US 250 Motocross Championship and the Supercross series as soon as he started working with Honda and De Coster, Ricky was of course one of the leaders of the US Team in the 1986 MXoN, alongside David Bailey (the 500cc US Motocross Champion) and Johnny O’Mara.

The rivalry between USA and Europe has always been part of the sport, but in 1986 the Americans put on an incredible show in Maggiora, scoring the best possible result as they went first and second in each of the three races! It was not really a surprise to





see Ricky Johnson and David Bailey winning races aboard their 250cc and 500cc CR's, but nobody could imagine to see the 125cc CR of Johnny O'Mara twice in second overall among the best 250cc and 500cc riders! Johnny was 'on fire' in September 1986, and when he passed current 500cc World Champion David Thorpe during the 125/500 race many people were shocked and understood that team USA was on another planet.... 1986 was only the sixth of thirteen wins in a row for team USA, who will come to this 2016 edition to try for their twenty third win; after their last win in 2011, Team USA is already the most successful team in this event, far ahead of Great Britain, 16

wins, and Belgium, 15.

Unfortunately, the 1986 Motocross of Nations was also the last win for David Bailey, who got paralysed in a crash while practicing early in 1987. With his legendary riding style, David 'The Professor' was one of the top US riders from 1982 to 1986, winning no less than four US titles (one in Supercross and three in Motocross), two US Grand Prix', five consecutive Motocross of Nations and three Trophy of Nations. For Johnny O'Mara 1986 was also one of the turning points in his career, as he changed brand the next season and never got another title; twice US champion, four times winner of the MXoN and three times winner of the Tro-

phy of Nations, Johnny was an incredible 'showman' all over the world. Only Ricky Johnson, three years younger than his teammates continued to 'rule the world' in motocross and supercross, winning US titles in 1987 and 1988 and two other Motocross of Nations to become one of the most successful US athletes with seven US titles, four GP wins, and five 'Nations' wins (one at the Trophy and four at the MX). All three riders remain involved in the sport as trainers, TV commentator or advisers for several companies who will never forget what these three riders brought to the sport in the 80's.

Text & photos: Pascal Haudiquert.



Ricky Johnson

Birth Date: July 6th, 1964

1989: Winner of the 250 US Grand Prix

1988: US 250 Supercross and US 500 Motocross Champion

Winner of the Motocross of Nations

Winner of the 250 US Grand Prix

1987: US 250 and US 500 Motocross Champion

Winner of the Motocross of Nations

Winner of the 250 US Grand Prix

1986 US 250 Supercross and 250 Motocross Champion

Winner of the Motocross of Nations

Winner of the 500 US Grand Prix

1984: Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

US 250 Motocross Champion

1982: 2nd in the US 125 Motocross Championship

David Bailey

Birth Date: December 31, 1961

1986: US 500 Motocross Champion

Winner of the Motocross of Nations

1985: 2nd in the US 500 Motocross Championship

Winner of the 500 US Grand Prix

Winner of the Motocross of Nations

1984: US 500 Motocross Champion

Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

1983: US 250 Supercross and US 250 Motocross Champion

Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

Winner of the 250 US Grand Prix

1982: Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

Johnny O'Mara

Birth Date: March 25th, 1961

1986: Winner of the Motocross of Nations

3rd in the 250 US Motocross and the 250 US

Supercross Championships

1985: Winner of the 250 US Grand Prix

2nd in the 250 US Motocross Championship

1984: 250 US Supercross Champion

2nd in the US 125 Motocross Championship

Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

1983: 125 US Motocross Champion

1982: Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

2nd in the US 125 Motocross Championship

Winner of the 125 Grand Prix of Switzerland

1981: Winner of the Motocross of Nations (500cc)

Winner of the Trophy of Nations (250cc)

2nd in the US 125 Motocross Championship

1980: Winner of the 125 US Grand Prix

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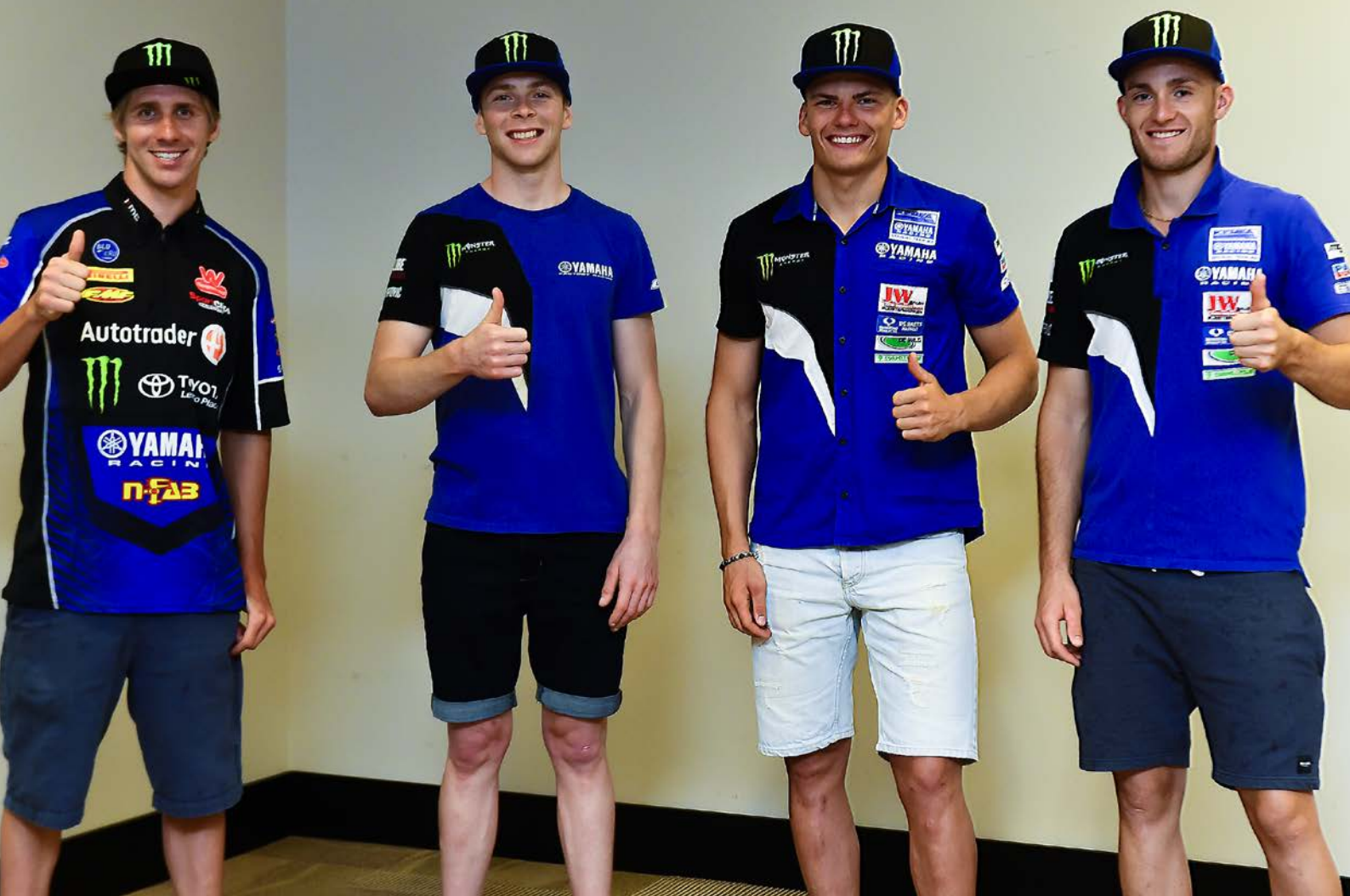
Imagine if motocross took place indoors, for one night only. Imagine how amazing the atmosphere would be! You could see the entire track; you wouldn't miss a single pass or crash. Imagine if the best supercross riders came over to Europe to race the best MX2 and MXGP riders. Who would be better, the European's or the Americans?

The wait is over! The best of America and the best of Eu-

rope and the rest of the world will be squaring off against each other in a battle of pride and glory on October 8th inside the VELTINS-Arena, Gelsenkirchen, Germany at the first ever Monster Energy SMX Riders' and Manufacturers' Cup, an invitation only race where the manufacturers' KTM, Husqvarna, Honda, Suzuki, Yamaha, Kawasaki and TM select 4 of their fastest riders from absolutely anywhere in the world to rep-







resent their brand.

So far, Ryan Dungey, Marvin Musquin and Jeffrey Herlings will make up three quarters of the KTM team, Jason Anderson, Zach Osborne and Max Nagl will represent the guys in white, Husqvarna, while Tim Gajser, Gautier Paulin and Evgeny Bobryshev will be flying the flag for Honda. All three teams are yet to announce their Jokers, the fourth rider.

It's a tough job, but someone's got to do it. Some teams are taking longer than others to select their powerhouse line-ups for the all new and exciting Monster Energy Supermotocross Riders' and

Manufacturers' Cup, but at the MXGP of The Netherlands in Assen last month, Yamaha and Suzuki finally revealed their hands and threw their cards on the table.

Adding to the league of legends already named to race, Yamaha have just gone and given you even more reasons to buy tickets to the most incredible race of the year with the announcement that the 2015 MXGP world champion and Motocross of Nations champion Romain Febvre will be joined by another Motocross of Nations star, America's wild child, Justin Barcia. Both Febvre and Barcia are animals on the bike and they aren't afraid to lay it all on

the line if it means getting to the checkered flag first. Put them on the same team, and the boys in blue are a major force to the SMX throne. The third rider for Yamaha is going to be Benoit Paturel, who also knows how to twist his right wrist pretty hard as a rider who has finished on the podium in MX2 three times this year, and is sitting third in the FIM MX2 World Championship and has also been selected to represent the defending MXoN champions, Team France, at the end of this month. Yamaha are also the first team to announce all four riders, with Brent Van Doninck rounding out their team.



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FEBVRE
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NAGL
PAULIN
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While Yamaha have a hungry team of riders', the hungriest team manager is likely to be Stefan Everts, as a dude that has the will to win running through his veins. In case you didn't know already, team Suzuki is now owned and managed by the most successful motocross rider in the world, the ten-time FIM Motocross World Champion, Stefan Everts, who since retiring has shown a keen interest in the development of young riders. At the end of 2015, Everts took an ambitious young Swiss rider, in the form of Jeremy Seewer, under his wing and has propelled him to the top of MX2. Seewer has landed on the box ten times this season and is likely to be the vice world champion in MX2.

American Jake Weimer will bring a wealth of knowledge to the team in terms of racing indoors and the 'show' factor that racing inside a stadium entails. Weimer moved from Kawasaki to Suzuki at the start of 2016 where he said he was excited for the new challenge and to give back to Suzuki in results and product development. Joining Seewer and Weimer will be Suzuki's MXGP rookie Aminos Jasikonis who is says it is a dream come true for him to be able to bang bars with some of the biggest legends in modern day motocross and to be able to represent Suzuki in one of the biggest races of the year.

With five of the seven teams

announced, we already know we are in for a massive night of jam-packed, hard core motocross action where the best supercross and motocross riders from America and the rest of the world will go bar to bar in front of 35,000 screaming fans. The atmosphere will be epic and the show will be even better. Who will be the fastest, the most agile, and the most versatile? Who will win, an American or a European? You won't want to miss it, the Monster Energy SMX Riders' and Manufacturers' Cup, October 8th, inside the VELTINS-Arena, Gelsenkirchen, Germany. Get your tickets today at <http://smx-schalke.motocross-tickets.com>



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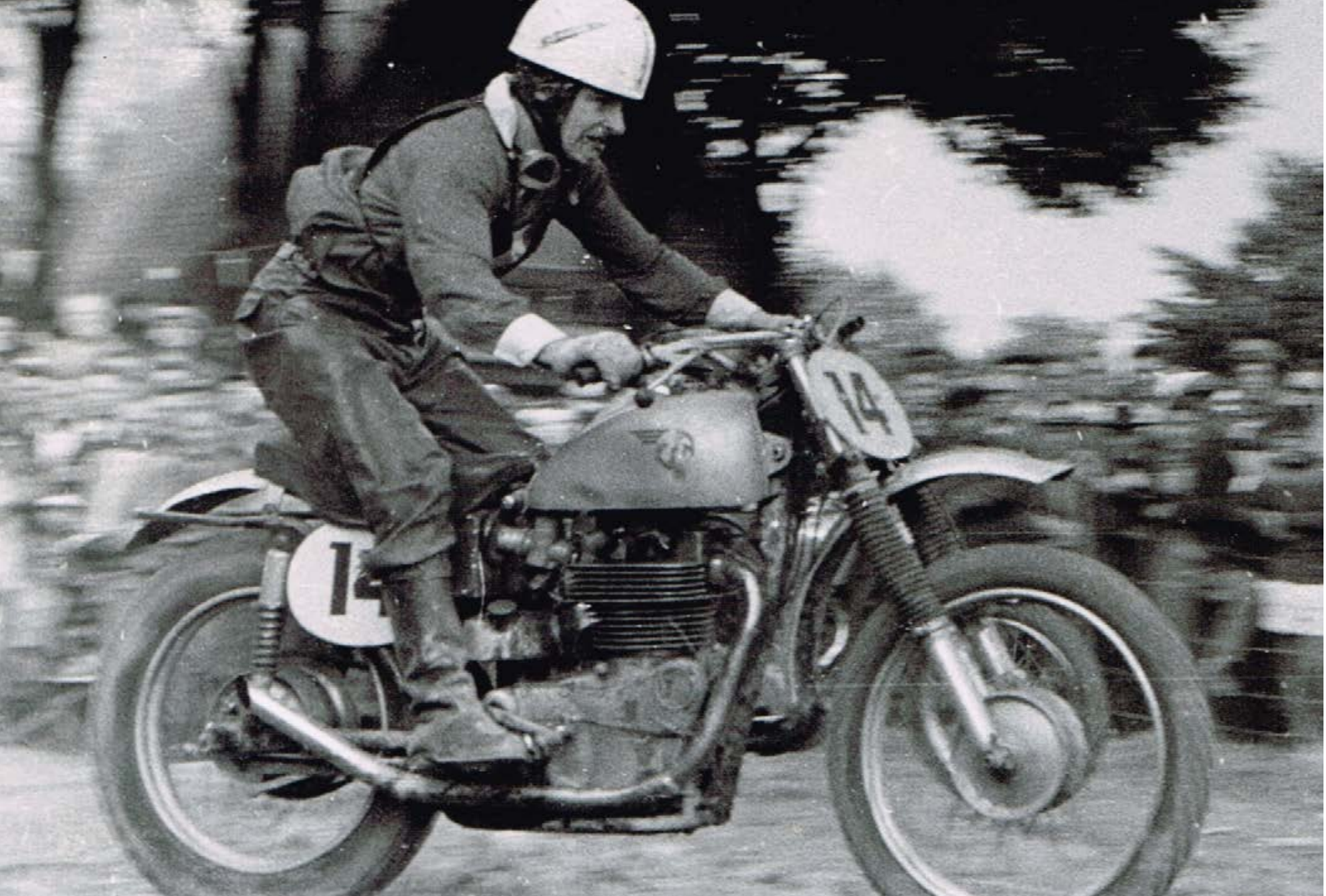
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Rene Baeten's 1958 FN 500

René Baeten was born in Herentals in northern Belgium on June 10th 1927 and was one of the best motocross riders of his era. Despite not starting his racing career until he was 20 years-old it wasn't long before he found himself on everybody's radar and within 6 years he was among the elite of Europe's finest motocross riders, placing 2nd overall in the European 500cc Championship two years running in 1953 and 1954.

The following two seasons left Baeten off the podium, barely placing inside the top ten but

when the European 500cc Championship was upgraded to world championship status in 1957, Baeten was back in business, showing everybody his obvious talents. Despite his efforts and after a close run world championship campaign, Baeten fell short of becoming the first ever motocross world champion by a single point, finishing 2nd to Sweden's Bill Nilsson. However, 1957 was to be the year of his life.

Even though he didn't know him personally, according to Sylvain Geboers, René Baeten was the

first true professional motocross rider that took his racing seriously and he was good friends with the cycling world champion at that time Rik van Looy, who also hailed from Herentals. Both riders had access to their own sports doctor, a man by the name of Dr. Claes, the father of the doctor of the same name that fixes up a lot of today's current professional racers and as a racer he was inspirational to watch as Sylvain recalls:

'He was fantastically fast through the corners at that time; it was unbelievable and watching him in-

spired me to go as fast as he was going when I started riding'.

History

Nowadays we are used to seeing the 'big 4' brands of Kawasaki, Honda, Suzuki and Yamaha as well as Husqvarna, KTM and TM out on track. Of those 7 brands only Husqvarna has stood the test of time and is still going strong today, the Swedish brand being the first ever world champions in 1957 with a Swede at the 'bars in the form of Bill Nilsson. But back then, brands such as AJS, BSA, Norton, Monark, Crescent, Matchless, SarolËa, Maico and Jawa led the way, and in Belgium one brand in particular stood out, and that was FN. These two letters were an abbreviation of 'Fabrique National de Herstal' otherwise know as the

National Factory of Herstal, and just like the British-built BSA, FN motorcycles were little more than an after thought with the company's primary business being the production of arms and ammunition.

The first FN motorcycle rolled off the production line in 1901 but during the 1950's FN were a real force to be reckoned with and was widely regarded as the biggest factory effort leading up to the 1960's and engines were produced with the primary aim of going racing at the highest level. In fact, FN was way ahead of its time, and anyone who raced for them were in a real privileged position; frames were made to measure and so each bike was a 'one size does

not fit all' item.

The engines were fast too and when Sten Lundin, the 1959 world champion tested one prior to lifting the crown for Monark his comments were that while they were fast in a straight line on tarmac, at 5000rpm and 40bhp they were just too powerful with too much wheel spin on a race track made of dirt. However, FN themselves determined that they had a user-friendly engine that was a more sedate 20bhp at 2000rpm lower down the rev range. You just had to know how to ride it!

The FN looked heavy and cumbersome but despite that, the excessive use of aluminium and magnesium ensured that the FN



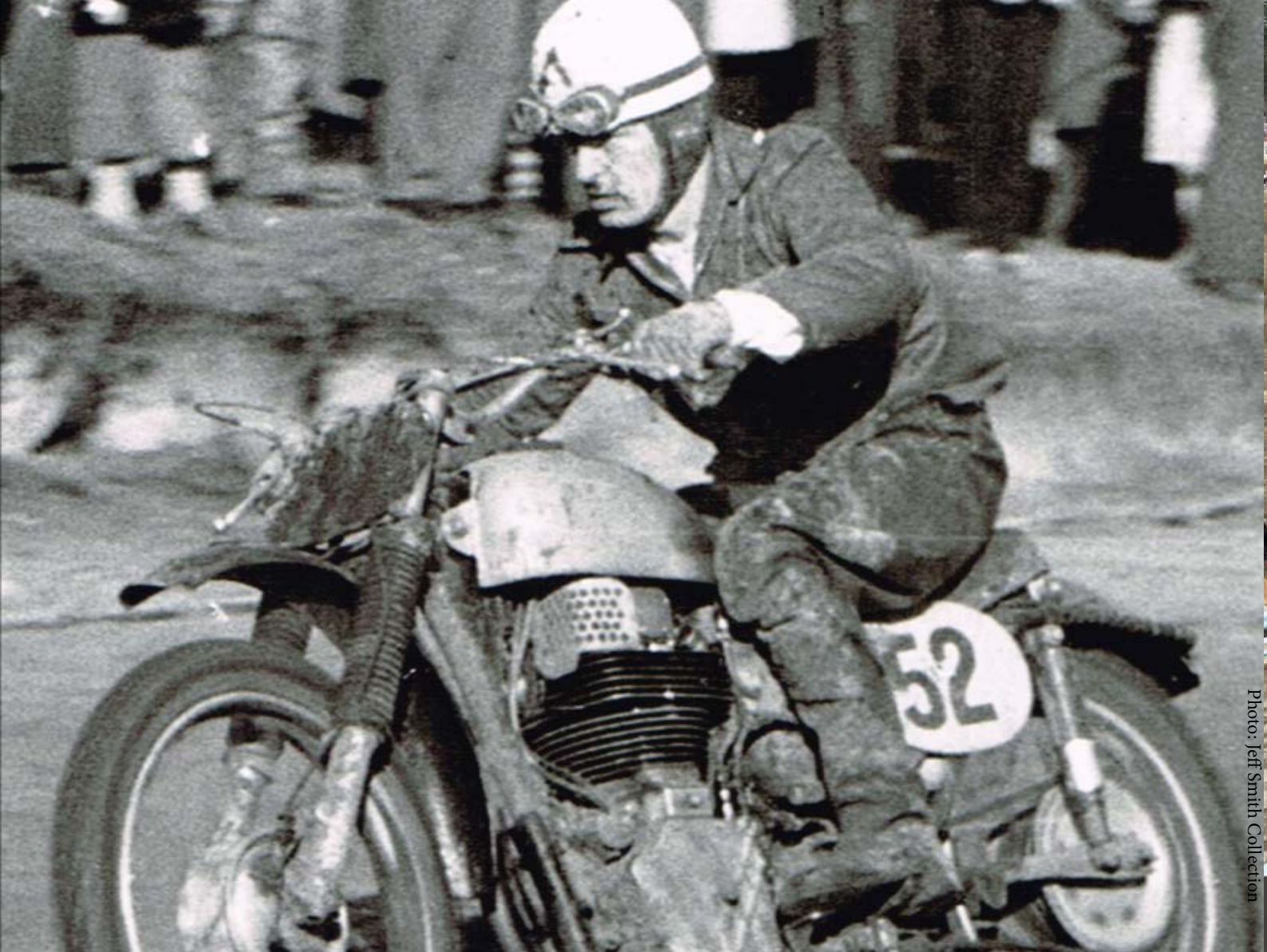


Photo: Jeff Smith Collection

was one of the lightest bikes on the start line weighing in at just under 300lbs; 297lbs to be exact, or 134.7kg. Compare that to the weight of Jeff Smith's 1964 world championship winning BSA that came in at 246lbs or 111.5kg, a difference of 23 kilos, or the equivalent weight of a small child! This gives an indication of the Herculean efforts needed to muscle these lumps of metal around in the name of entertainment. No wonder the riders of that generation were much revered and respected at the same time; they were a different breed of animal altogether.

The 1958 season was as good as it got though for FN with Ren  Baeten winning the 500cc world championship and his Belgian

teammate Hubert Scaillet placing 5th. However, the FN Factory closed its doors on the competition world at the end of that historic season amid concerns of massive financial losses, which was particularly strange to some who thought that FN was in a strong position both on and off the track. But despite being one of the first, if not THE first factory to lease out its motorcycles to anyone with a big enough wallet, lack of sales inevitably meant the swift demise of the Belgian brand. New technology and the emergence of the 2-stroke was not that far away either and the FN was sadly, outdated.

Baeten claimed a second Belgian championship in 1959 but on the world stage could only muster up

9th overall. The worst was to come though and during the following season, Baeten sadly succumbed to head injuries sustained in a crash after his throttle jammed on a downhill. He was 32 but his legacy lived on to inspire a new generation of Belgian riders such as Joel Robert who would go on to claim 6 world titles in the 250cc class.

Despite the racing department closing in 1960 motorcycles were still produced up until 1967. As for FN though, the company is still around today and is a world-leading firearms manufacturer and the largest exporter of military small arms in Europe.

Photos: Terry Good and Tom White



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An aerial photograph of a motocross track. The track is a light-colored, sandy or dirt path that winds through a landscape of green trees and some cleared areas. In the upper left, there's a large, multi-story building, possibly a school or a government building, surrounded by more trees. A road or path leads from the building towards the track. The track itself has several turns and straight sections. A large black rectangular box is overlaid on the bottom half of the image, containing white text. The text reads "B'Russian up on The Juniors".

B'Russian up on The Juniors



One of the coolest things about kids is that their dreams are always bigger than their fears, and in a sport where the 'fear-factor' plays such a big part, it's always a pleasure to see riders chasing their dreams. Most kids are relatively fearless anyway; they're too young to worry about putting food on the table, or the soreness of their muscles the next day, all they really worry about is beating their mates, or putting in a ride that is worthy of an ice-cream stop on the way home.

While most kids would be pumped with an ice cream after racing, for some it's not enough, it only leaves them hungrier for more. Those young racers are generally the ones that knuckle down

from a young age and are the ones that are willing to eat, sleep and breathe motocross until they get to a point in their tender careers where they feel ready to show the world what they've got. That's where the FIM Junior Motocross World Championship comes into play as the most prestigious youth event in the world that is renowned for spotlighting future champions.

The FIM Junior Motocross World Championship is the pinnacle of the year for the world's fastest young riders. It takes place annually and is hosted by a different country every time. It runs over two days with the first day, typically a Saturday, being a practice day and qualifying, while Sunday is saved for the

main events.

This year the kids that dream of hitting the pro ranks in the not too distant future travelled out to Orlyonok, Russia, a small village nestled on the shore of the Black Sea, where they battled multiple elements from extreme heat, to a mega choppy track in the hopes of earning themselves a hot ticket to the premier amateur series, the European Championship, where they can use that season as a stepping-stone to MX2 or MXGP.

With temperatures hovering well above 30° Celsius, combined with scorching humidity, the world's fastest motocross kids went bar-to-bar on the sun baked rocky surface of Orlyonok. The

mega firm and dry surface meant traction was scarce, and throttle control and line choice was of the essence. On the first day in Russia, DP19 Racing Yamaha Yamaha's Roan Van de Moosdijk topped the charts in the 125cc class, the category that is so often described as the cheat sheet on what to expect from the next generation. The Dutchman edged out long-time rival, Jago Geerts the recently crowned European EMX125 champion, to go pole.

Before heading out to Russia, Van de Moosdijk, who is trained and mentored by former FIM Motocross World Champion, David Philippaerts, said, "I want to be world champion, that's my goal in

Russia. For the entire season my goal was simply to do my best every week. I think I achieved that goal and it has always been my dream to be the best in the world."

Van de Moosdijk couldn't have been any closer to achieving that dream as he put in an incredible ride in race one for the win ahead of Geerts, but then was taught the importance of a good start in race two when he followed Geerts over the Fox Hole-shot line. Van de Moosdijk's start wasn't bad in the second race, he was third, his biggest problem was that Geerts was in second and with both riders being so evenly matched in speed, all he could hope for was a mistake by Geerts. That

mistake never happened and Geerts did what he has been doing all year long. He rode smart, kept cool and got the job done. The dynamic duo tied on 47 points each with Geerts crowned world champion since he finished better than Van de Moosdijk in the final race.

In the shadow of Geerts and Van de Moosdijk, who went 2-1 and 1-2 to mount the top two steps of the podium, Jakub Teresak proved he knows how to ride a bike wide open too. The Czech rider wasn't too far off the pace, in fact he could be something of a golden egg, someone just needs to blow those left over feathers off of the shell so he can shine. He finished third. In the 85cc class, fresh off





of his European Championship domination where he won both moto's by miles for the title, Austria's Rene Hofer validated his gold plate by destroying everyone in every session and both races for his first ever world title. While Hofer proved he's worth the investment for any teams looking for a rider to take into the 125cc ranks, there is one other kid that really stood out even though he didn't land on the podium. That kid is Japan's Jo Shimoda. The young Japanese star has got such a rad style on the bike. He knows how to launch the jumps, with a stylish tap of the rear brake to bring everything into check. In the first race he gapped it and was leading by a country mile before his front tyre went flat and dropped him way back to nineteenth. In

race two, he was buried in the pack on the opening lap, but didn't let it faze him, he soon made his way into second and pulled a massive gap on third. Even though he didn't get the result he deserved, it's safe to say that Shimoda will be a legendary Japanese rider. Rounding off the podium was Meico Vettik who put in a 2 – 4 performance for second overall while Russia's own Maksim Kraev went 3 – 5 for third.

And last but not least, along side the FIM Junior Motocross World Championship, the Open European 65cc Championship also took place. Big things were expected of Latvia's little ripper Edvards Bidzans as the reigning EMX65 champion but instead it was his fellow countryman

Karlis Reisulis who cracked junior motocross stardom with his impressive second place behind another breakout star Kirill Vorobyev. Vorobyev was responsible for the rowdy fans as the best placed Russian rider of the weekend. The young Russian flew in under the radar, but the secret is out now! This kid is awesome. He swept both moto's to beat the Latvian Reisulis and fellow Russian Alexy Orlov, who salvaged third after letting the nerves of such a big event get to him. And just like that the FIM Junior Motocross World Championship was done for another year. Next year the event will be played out in Estonia at Tartu in what looks to be the perfect circuit for the future generation to push the boundaries and go for gold.

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Photo: R. Schedl

Paddock Talks

01/Nice to see this familiar face, Davide Guarneri back at MXGP.

02/FMF's Donny Emmeler & Donny Emmeler Jr pose for a picture with Rockstar Energy Husqvarna Racing's Antti Pyrh nen

03/Opening ceremony at the MXGP of Switzerland presented by iXS

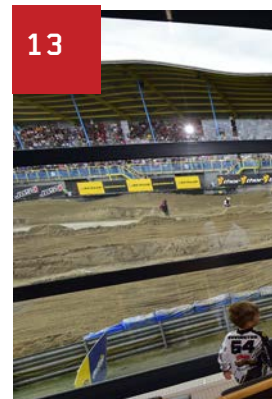
04/Two major motorsport icons in this photo! F1 driver Sebastian Vettel shakes hands with the GOAT, Stefan Everts

05/Jeremy Seewer presented his Limited Edition iXS edelweiss inspired jersey that he designed himself for his home grand prix

06/MXGP souvenir cups where 100% of the proceeds go to the IRP charity

07/Paul Malin & Lisa Leyland chat with Yamaha's Paolo Pavesio about the YZ125 Cup that will take place at the Monster Energy SMX Riders' Cup

08/Team Belgium for the Monster Energy FIM Motocross of Nations, Kevin Strijbos, Clement Desalle, Jeremy Van Horebeek with the team manager Joel Smets





Paddock Talks



09/Don't miss the Monster Energy SMX Riders' and Manufacturers' Cup, October 8th at the VELTINS-Arena, Gelsenkirchen, Germany

10/Yamaha Europe president Mr Kuwata visited the MXGP of the Netherlands.

11/It says finish, but this is how it all starts. Kids are given the opportunity to ride at the MXGP of The Netherlands at the Yamaha Junior experience.

12/Alessandro Lupino gives his condolences to the people affected by the devastating earthquake in Italy

13/Corporate boxes at the MXGP of The Netherlands

QUESTIONS TO THE EDITOR

Dear MXGP,
I'm a German journalist, how
can I get the accreditation for
the Monster Energy SMX Riders' Cup?

Thanks,
Frank

Dear Frank,
you can send an email to
s.gelli@mxgp.com and she
will let you know how to
proceed.

Best Regards
MXGP

Hi MXGP,
I was wondering where I can
double check the European timing
schedule to watch the two
American rounds of the FIM
Motocross World Championship.

Thanks,
Marc

Hi Marc
Check MXGP-TV.com schedule
on the right bar of the homepage.
The timing is synchronised
with the time zone of your computer.

Regards
MXGP

Hi MXGP,
Is there any possibility to watch
some races from 2014?

Thanks,
Betty

Hello Betty,
Thank you for your interest. You
can either log into www.MXGP-TV.com or go to MXGP youtube
page and check the playlists
from 2014 where the full races
are online for free.

All the best,
MXGP

Hi MXGP
Motors TV has gone from the
UK. Is there any plans in the
pipe line for MXGP to air on
another channel?.

Thanks,
Lewis

Hello Lewis,
In UK MXGP is broadcast-
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don't forget you can always
watch MXGP LIVE on www.mxgp-tv.com.

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